

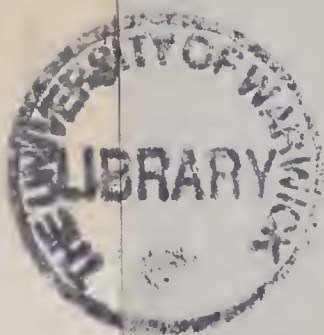
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Governor's Wife

Comedy in two acts

By
Thomas Milderhall

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THE
GOVERNOR'S WIFE

A COMEDY

IN

TWO ACTS

BY

THOMAS MILDENHALL,

AUTHOR OF

*The Post of Honour—Marriage Certificate—Two Heads better
than One, &c, &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

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(Opposite Southampton Street. Covent Garden Market.)

LONDON.

therefore wish you to do the honours of my establishment to Miss Somerdown, on her arrival.

HICK. Certainly, sir.

GOVER. Nay, more—I wish you to personate *me*.

HICK. What—I personate you! *Me*, pass for a governor! Oh, governor, that's a *leetle* too much—my governorship would be on so very small a scale, compared to—

GOVER. You will do very well. I have already informed my household, that I expect them when I am gone to pay you the same obedience I would have them pay to *me*.

HICK. Bless my soul. I hope I shall be able to—hem!

GOVER. My reason for this is, simply to agreeably surprise Miss Somerdown in my favour; when the truth is known, she will, of course, be more readily inclined to marry me then unhesitatingly, from the sheer circumstance of escaping such an odd, strange little sort of a Governor as you must appear to her.

HICK. He! he! he! yes, certainly—hem. Oh—of course, of course—I'm not very tall, to be sure—but I suppose there are small governors, as well as large ones.

GOVER. Certainly, my worthy little representative; and now for your instructions.—Act as circumstances require; not forgetting the dignity belonging to your supposed situation; and, although I desire you above all things, to be very delicate in your attentions towards Miss Somerdown, yet you may even go so far as to make love to her.

HICK. Make love to her! La, sir—suppose she should take it in earnest, and return the compliment?

GOVER. Should she do so, I shall have a very indifferent opinion of her judgment, or indeed her delicacy; as it must, of course, prove that fortune, and not personal figure or accomplishments entirely sway her inclinations.

HICK. Not exactly that, sir. No accounting for a lady's taste, sir. Some men, though small, are elegant; others large, clumsy, and good for nothing. Ahem!

GOVER. We won't argue on this point, Hickory. I have made up my mind to the scheme, because I have no doubt it will turn out in my favour. ~~Xcannon without.X~~ As I live, a ship just come into the harbour! It brings my lovely bride—send an escort for her, Hickory—you will, no doubt, find her at the hotel in a short time. I go—I go—be cautious, Hickory, as you value my future favours.

Exit L.

HICK. A governor! But what shall I do for a dress? Oh, I can furnish myself with one out of the stores; and who shall I trust to bring the lady here. Let me see, there's Agamemnon.

and Julius Caesar, and Nebuchadnezzar, and—ay, Neb's the boy—I can rely on him—hollo—Neb.

Enter NEB, R. H.

NEB. Here I am, massa.

HICK. You must go directly to the hotel on the quay, and by the time you get there, a young lady will have landed from the last ship arrived. It is the governor's intended wife, Neb.

NEB. Iss—and gubbernor tell me you to take him place when him away—Golly!

HICK. I am, Neb; but hasten, or the lady will be expecting us to receive her.

NEB. (*crosses to L. H.*) Is she berry fine lady, massa?

HICK. Oh, of course she'll put on her best dress to come here; and get a guard of honour, and the girls to attend her, and a palanquin, and bring her as a governor's wife ought to come; so fly, Neb, and bring the lady here as soon as you can, while I go and dress for my character. Fly, Neb—fly.

Exit, R. H.

NEB. Golly! Me fly, like a lilly bird.

Exit L. H.

SCENE II.—*A Room in an Hotel, characteristic of the Country. An Archway or opening at the back. (2nd and 3rd grooves.)*

Enter CAPTAIN HOLYSTONE—MISS SOMERDOWN, *plainly dressed*—LETTY BRIGGS, *very finely so, with feathers in her bonnet, &c., and* LIEUTENANT TREVOR, *C. from R.*

CAPTAIN. Welcome—welcome to Surinam; here we are at last, after a most delightful voyage.

LETTY. A what? a delightful voyage do you call it? Why, we set out in a storm—I'm sure I thought myself a great fool for coming, before we passed the Rocks of Scilly, and I wished myself a hundred times at home, *stitching* away for my living, by the time we got to the *Needles*. I imagined I should sing like a lark all the voyage, instead of which there was no lark about me by the time we passed the *Canaries*. (*TREVOR and MISS SOMERDOWN go up laughing.*)

CAPTAIN. Why, to be sure, my dear miss, we had a little wind now and then, but—

LETTY. A little wind! A perfect hurricane all the way—we counted our chickens before they were hatched, for our hen-coops, hens, and all, were washed overboard; and you can't deny but we lost most of our *pigs* by a *sou'-wester*.

CAPTAIN. Ha, ha, ha! A *ner'-wester*, my little waterwitch

—and so you are come to Surinam to mend your fortune by matrimony—eh?

LETTY. Exactly so. I understand this is a good place for it. I know Miss Swivelstare went to the Indies, and with less pretensions than I have, I flatter myself, succeeded in securing a nabob. Indeed, although she had a most horrible squint, she contrived somehow to *hook* him with her *eyes*.

CAPTAIN. And I have no doubt but your superior accomplishments will, with those lovely eyes, hook a prize worth catching, or you will prove a very bad angler, my pretty little Letty.

LETTY. Oh, captain. (*curtseys.*) Yes, as you say, with my accomplishments. I was bred and born in no less a distinguished quarter than Cow Cross, Smithfield—was educated in that delightful vicinity—became assistant in the same establishment where I received my rudiments, and lived genteely in a cemetery for young ladies, till the living died away to nothing, as a body may say—for when the governess, Miss Scratchcat, died, all went to the dogs, so finding that a young lady to assist in a large school, must be mistress of French, know the use of the globes, teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, plain and ornamental needlework, and music, with many more accomplishments too numerous to mention, for eight pounds a year, I cut the concern. For you must know I had a lover—a young pig-driver from Hogs-Norton; he used to attend Smithfield Market, we loved and quarrelled, and he took his pigs to another market.

CAPTAIN. But not a better, as far as you were concerned, I'm sure.

LETTY. No; as he found out to his cost. Ah, after he proved untrue to me, misfortune soon overtook him.

CAPTAIN. Indeed! How?

LETTY. He got married—got an old wife for her money, and I've the satisfaction of knowing, poor fellow, he is as miserable as he can possibly be. (*goes up to Miss SOMERDOWN and TREVOR, who rise and meet her.*) With your permission, good folks, I shall do myself the pleasure of dining with you here. In the meantime—I dressed myself in my best, as you see, before we left the ship, that I may take a walk, and look about me a little. I think I shall astonish them in this part of the world, with the Polka, and the Waltz Cellarius—for we may say of them dances, as my lover said of his pigs—that though in England they are on the *decline*, they will answer for *consumption* abroad. Adieu! Adieu! *Exit C. and R.*

CAPTAIN. Come, cheer up—cheer up, my dear Miss Somerdown, here we are in port at last. By-the-bye, Miss, I must talk to you—your father entrusted you to my care, to take

you to the governor of this place, to be married unto him, till death do ye part, and a precious spot of work you've made of it, by tumbling in love with my nephew, the first lieutenant here, during the voyage.

TREVOR. Well, sir, and how could I avoid falling in love with my Emily? Even you, yourself, gave a sanction to our mutual attachment, therefore—

CAPTAIN. Me! I gave a sanction! I only told you, you ought not to let an old dogfish of a governor run away with such a lovely creature, and that were I a young handsome fellow like yourself, and loved her, I'd marry her, in spite of all the governors and fathers in the universe.

TREVOR. You did, my dear uncle, you did; and I would have followed your good advice, as I always do, you know, only my Emily wouldn't let me.

CAPTAIN. She wouldn't! She won't marry you, then?

TREVOR. No, sir; she has positively refused.

CAPTAIN. And she'll marry this old governor, instead of a smart young fellow like yourself?

TREVOR. Such is her determination, sir.

CAPTAIN. Is it? Then I beg to say, she don't know what's good for herself.

Miss S. My dear Captain Holystone, you know our family embarrassments—you know the distresses of my father.

CAPTAIN. I do, I do, and wish from my heart I could relieve them.

Miss S. Of that I am certain. My marriage with this governor, who is very rich, will bring wealth to me, if not happiness, and make me the means of saving my poor father from hopeless poverty.

CAPTAIN. Granted.

Miss S. Were you my father, would you not expect your daughter to perform one voluntary act, to save you from the horrors of a prison? The humiliation of becoming a beggar, to those who called themselves your friends in prosperity, but who shun you, when they find you in need of their assistance.

CAPTAIN. Noble girl! Fred, I'm afraid there's no chance of cutting out this lovely little craft from the clutches of the old governor. Well, my dear, you have taught me my duty in this affair, and I suppose I must do it; therefore, Frederick, as I have business on board, you wait on the governor, and inform him of our arrival. (to Miss SOMERDOWN.) Then, however unwillingly I may set about it, I suppose I must wait on and felicitate your future husband, tell him how uncommonly happy I am to see his infernal ugly mug, and how delighted I feel at the prospect of his happiness with you, whom he is

going to render miserable ; although, at the same time, I could kick the old dog, or send him with a hearty good will to Davy Jones's locker. Good-bye, my dear, good-bye ; I shall soon be back.

Exit C. and R.

MISS S. Not one word, Frederick ?

TREVOR. What can I say, my Emily ? I have no means of extricating you from the clutches of my ancient rival, unless—come, act with spirit ; refuse this old grampus, scamper off with me to a parson, let us get spliced, go back to your father, kneel and ask his blessing. He'll look tragical at first, I know ; he'll then relent, pat our heads, turn up his eyes, say “ You've been very naughty children,” then giving us his blessing, with uplifted hands, exclaim—“ Heaven prosper you, my pretty little lambkins !”

MISS S. No, Frederick ; my dear father's embarrassments are too heavy to be obviated by such an arrangement, however willingly my heart responds to your wishes. That he would forgive, and bless me, I know ; but his blessing would fall as a curse upon my heart, when I reflected that I was the only cause which barred him from comfort and independence.

TREVOR. Is this your final determination, Emily ?

MISS S. It must be, Frederick. Go, go to the governor, and say I am here. Let *me* do my duty—do yours also. Go, go.

TREVOR. I will. I have no happiness now, but in obeying your commands ; although, no matter, nothing is left me now, but—

LETTY. (*without*, R. U. E.) Captain—Miss—Lieutenant ! where are you all ? I shall be carried off and undone !

NEB. (*without*.) Well, but, missy—I tell a you—

LETTY. (*without*.) Stand off, stand off, I say ; I—

LETTY runs on C. from R., followed by NEB.

Save me, save me from that horrid black monster.

TREVOR. What is the matter, my dear madam ?

MISS S. For heaven's sake—

LETTY. Listen ; I took a walk to look at the natives, and let 'em see who had arrived. I observed this black fellow watch, and follow me, from the moment I left the hotel, till at last he, that grinning nigger, told me he had been waiting for me ever since the boat had landed, and that he must take me before the governor.

TREVOR. Before the governor !

MISS S. Before the governor !

LETTY. Before the governor. The governor wants me—the governor must have me—the governor can't do without me.

TREVOR. What is the meaning, sir, of your annoying this lady?

NEB. Me no 'noy her ; me sent by gubbernor to 'scort dis a lady to gubbernor's palace. Him can't do without dis pretty young missy.

LETTY. Lord ha' mercy on me !

TREVOR. Speak intelligibly, you black rascal, or—

LETTY. Ay, speak intelligibly, you vile slave, or—

NEB. No, missy, beg a your pardon, no slave ; Neb, free, he be 'mancipated.

LETTY. Emancipated, are you. Then you're more *free* than welcome. In one word, blackee, what does the governor want with me?

NEB. He, he, he ! you know, missy.

LETTY. I know !

NEB. Iss, him 'pect you, him make a you great lady ; him make a you a lilly ting of his own.

LETTY. He won't make me anything of the sort, I can tell him. I'm come here to be married.

NEB. Golly ! yes, yes, me know dat, I say so ; you marry de gubbernor.

TREVOR. }
MISS S. } Marry the governor !

LETTY. I marry the governor !

NEB. Iss, you come here a purpose.

LETTY. Do I ? Not that I know off.

NEB. Don't a let your pretty lilly heart fail, missy ; he nice old Gubbernor, lub you dearly. Here, sar, you see him 'pect dis pretty missy by you ship, he send me to 'scort she to him palace, and I had de slaves, and de palanquin, and. de musicianners, to play before de pretty lady all de way home.

LETTY. I'm astonished, into a perfect piece of putrefaction !
(*goes up to door to look for palanquin.*)

TREVOR. As I live, Emily, this blundering black mistakes the girl for you. Ha ! ha ! I'll ask him a question to determine it. (*aloud, crossing to NEB.*) And pray, Mr. Neb, why are you so positive that this is the lady you are sent to escort to the governor's house?

NEB. Me know she well. Me inquire how many lady arrive in you ship, um say two, dat's a couple ; dis a young lady, (*pointing to LETTY.*) and dis a young woman. (*pointing to MISS SOMERDOWN.*) She only come to wait on lady, and, he ! he ! he ! by-and-bye to nurse a missy's pretty little piccanninies.

LETTY. (*sits down, R.*) Nurse my piccanninies ! What does

the savage mean? Lieutenant—(*crosses to TREVOR.*) will you have the goodness to explain; or you, my dear? (*to EMILY.*)
(*NEB goes up to door.*)

TREVOR. (*to LETTY.*) Hush—hush! All's right—come here. The fact is, the governor has had intelligence of your coming, wants a wife, and has selected you; your fortune's made if you marry him. (*LETTY considering to herself—he speaks aside to EMILY.*) My dear Emily, for heaven's sake humour this joke, no matter why, and perhaps it may turn out for our mutual happiness.

MISS S. But how?

TREVOR. How? Umph! I don't exactly know *how*—but join in the deceit, I conjure you.

LETTY. Come here, lieutenant. I've been cogitating this over in my mind, and you're right. Nothing like seeing the world. I might have buried myself in a cemetary for young ladies all my life, and died if I had lived in London, without getting such a chance as this. Come here, blackee; pray what sort of a creature is this I'm to be married to?

NEB. (R. H.) Oh, him fine gentleman; upright as him walking-tick.

LETTY. Bless me. I dare say a tall, proud, rather scornful, isn't he? A stiff sort of an old gentleman?

NEB. 'Tiff as a poker.

LETTY. Mercy on me! I quite sink at the thoughts of meeting such an upright husband; but never mind, if he's rich. I'll ask. And this said governor is warm, eh?

NEB. Nice and comfortable; him bery warm in de hot weather.

LETTY. I mean—he's rich, I suppose; rich as a Jew, eh, blackee?

NEB. Oh, him rich as two Jews. Him dine off gold and silver—wash himself in rose-water—and even de lilly gold fishes wag dere lilly gold tails in him fish ponds.

LETTY. Oh, I'll marry him directly. I'll dabble in rose-water all day, and watch the little gold fishes wag their little pretty tails, to amuse me in the evening. I'm in a perfect trance of delight! and I feel as if I was sinking into a blessed state of silk cushions, and gauze bed-curtains. ~~X~~ *music heard without, R. U. E.* ~~X~~ Music! I'm in a place of enchantment! What mean those sounds?

NEB. Dey be de musicianers, to play before you to de gubbernor's.

LETTY. Oh!

NEB. And de slaves attend to bear you in de palankreen.

LETTY. Oh!

NEB. And de girls to wash you, and fan de flies from you pretty face, missy.

LETTY. Oh, dear!

NEB. And here 'em all come.

LETTY. I shall dissolve in a transport of delight. My exquisite sensibility can never stand this heavenly overflow of delirious deliciousness. I shall go off!

MISS S. (*offering vinaigrette.*) Pray use this.

LETTY. Thank you, my love. Of course I shall be happy to see you at the governor's; indeed, you must come; excuse my blushes, but I wish you to attend as one of my bridesmaids.

TREVOR. (R. H., to LETTY, *aside.*) I say, my dear madam, some difference between this match and the pig driver from Hogs-Norton.

LETTY. Sir! Quash the recollection for ever. I am ready—do with me as you please.

4th Act.
~~Music and procession.~~ Enter FOUR BLACKS, with a palanquin, C. from R., attended by SIX GIRLS with large feather fans. GUARD of SEPOYS, &c.

MISS S. (L.—*aside* to TREVOR.) Heavens! Where will this folly end?

TREVOR. End where it will, I am determined to see the termination. (to LETTY.) Madam, as I am officially engaged to wait on the governor, I shall do myself the honour of attending you to the palace.

LETTY. You may do so. The palace! Buckingham Palace, and a turn out of the Horse Guards, is nothing to these black guards! Hand me into that thingamy, will you? (*after various awkward attempts she gets seated in the palanquin.*)

TREVOR. Remain here, Emily, till the Captain's return. Ah! a thought has just struck me. I'll be with the Governor in a jiffy.

Exit hastily, C and R.

LETTY. Are we all ready, Blackee?

NEB. Iss, missy.

LETTY. Then on! On to the Governor's palace!

~~(repeat music.)~~ She his borne round the stage—she vulgarly adjusts herself in an attitude of great state, and is borne off, preceded by NEB—grinning with delight, and occasionally dancing, C and R.

MISS S. Frederick's unthinking folly will, I fear, plunge us into difficulty and confusion. I would immediately unravel this ridiculous mistake, but that it will end, no doubt, with an explanation satisfactory to the Governor, without my interference; and I see that the hope, however futile, of making me

his wife, urges Frederick on to join in the deception. Oh, how easily we find excuses for those we love!

Enter CAPTAIN HOLYSTONE, C from R.

CAPTAIN. Ah, my love, all alone—eh? What in the name of noise and confusion is all this drumming and processionizing for? I saw a cavalcade going along the street, and if my eyes didn't deceive, and I think they must—I could swear I saw that girl we brought over, perched in a palanquin, on the shoulders of a parcel of black rascals, grinning like the devil. I could almost swear to her feathers.

Miss S. (*aside.*) I will tell him the truth. (*aloud.*) You were not deceived, sir. You saw the young girl you mean, carried to the Governor's house.

CAPTAIN. What, Letty! The deuce I did! What's she going to do there?

Miss S. The person deputed to escort me to the Governor, made a slight mistake, and insisted that Letty, who I acknowledge appears a much finer lady than myself, is actually the intended bride expected by the Governor.

CAPTAIN. Taken off Letty to marry the Governor! Ha! ha! ha! why I understand he's a proud, fine old fellow—all etiquette and good breeding—however Fred's gone, I see, and will explain the mistake.

Miss S. Yes, sir—but Frederick—that is, Lieutenant Trevor, thought the—the mistake might remain, just as it is.

CAPTAIN. Indeed I don't doubt it—no—no—that won't do. I must, as you say, stick to my duty—there, come along, my love. I'll introduce you to the Governor, and make the explanation. Tho' odds heart, now I think of it, we'll take our time about it. It will be a good jest to hear of Letty's interview with the expectant swain, and his horror and amazement at a Smithfield bargain! Ha! ha! Come along, my dear.

Exeunt C. and R.

SCENE III.—*A Rich Apartment in the Governor's House.
(4th and 5th grooves.)*

Enter TREVOR, preceded by a SERVANT, C, from L.

TREVOR. Tell the governor I wish to see him on business.

Exit SERVANT, R.

Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughing! I have outstripped the escort, and gained a few minutes to talk to the governor. Lose my Emily! I will not if I can avoid it—I have formed

my scheme, such as it is, and sink or swim, I'll abide by it. Let me to business, and gather up my ideas in a few words—first, I am to persuade the governor that my worthy uncle, the captain, has brought over a *fictitious lady* for his wife—meaning *Miss Somerdown*, and that *Letty* is the lady whom he really expects—by this means I create a confusion, out of which, perhaps, something may arise to induce the governor to give me Emily, with his consent, or he may blow out my brains—or the captain and he may do it between them, and that will answer my purpose equally as well—for if I lose my Emily, why—

DOMESTIC. (*without, R.*) Room for the governor! (*Prompt 132*)

TREVOR. Oh, here comes the governor! Let me see. I have to deal with a strict tactician—a man of refined manners and elegance—umph!

Enter HICKORY, dressed as the Governor, R.—with a rich military coat and large epaulettes, buff breeches and high military boots, hat and feathers, sword, gauntlets, and cane, and surrounded by DOMESTICS and a MILITARY BAND.

TREVOR. I have the honour, I believe, of addressing His Excellency the Governor of Surinam?

HICK. You have that honour—hem! (*aside.*) I must bounce a bit, or he won't think so much of me.

TREVOR. (*aside.*) What an odd looking governor! (*aloud.*) I am first lieutenant of the Firefly, and am deputed by Captain Holystone to announce to you our arrival.

HICK. Good. And where is the captain—hey?

TREVOR. Returned on board under pressure of business; but in a short time he will have the honour of waiting on your excellency, with a few presents, sent for your acceptance. (*aside.*) Well, he is the queerest—

HICK. Good—very good! but among the articles brought, I believe, is a young lady, intended for my acceptance also—eh? Ha, ha, ha! I have already sent an escort for her, and—

TREVOR. I am aware of the circumstance. The lady whose destiny, I understand, you intend to unite with your own.

HICK. Yes, I find myself uncommonly in want of amusement, so I intend to get married, for a little recreation.

TREVOR. Sir!

HICK. Sir, to you!—anything more to say to me, sir? Hem! Hark'ye. (*to an ATTENDANT.*) Convey this letter to the town council, and a word in your ear—

(*retires up to the DOMESTICS, R.*)

TREVOR. This the governor of Surinam! Why he's an ignorant upstart. He get my Emily! the mongrel—never! I am

more determined now on my scheme than ever. So now for it. (*aloud.*) Governor, I beg your pardon—may I beg a word in private with you?

HICK. (*to his PEOPLE.*) Fall back, gentlemen—no listening. I have something privately to talk about with this young man, and listeners hear no good of themselves—hem! Now, sir.

TREVOR. Thus, then—The lady you expect, will certainly be here in a short time—but I—that is—we brought over *two* ladies in our ship, this voyage.

HICK. Two ladies—well, what's that to me? I'm not going to marry 'em both.

TREVOR. Exactly so. But it is necessary you should marry the *right* lady, governor.

HICK. Marry the right lady! What do you mean?

TREVOR. Governor, is anybody listening?

HICK. No, nobody—why, what—

TREVOR. There's a horrid plot against your peace and honour.

HICK. A plot against my peace and honour? Why, what do you mean? You—eh? D——n it, speak out. A plot! double the guard, there—and clap two sentries at the door! What sort of a plot?

TREVOR. Listen! the plot intended is, to pass a fictitious young person on you for a wife. The real lady will be here with your escort, and the pretended lady will arrive soon after, with—

HICK. Who—who? Let me know who the rascal is, and I'll hang him, as sure as I'm a governor. But why is this deception? Why is the Governor of Surinam singled out for this horrid piece of depravity?

TREVOR. Alas, your riches are the bait. The girl's friends being poor at home, are desirous of getting a handsome settlement for her abroad, and finding out by the—the captain, that you expected a wife, why—

HICK. I see, I see—and my poor master, the governor—I mean—I—myself, the governor, am to be tricked by a—Who is the concocter of this diabolical treachery?

TREVOR. (*aside.*) Now for it. (*aloud.*) In mentioning him, recollect governor, I place my commission—nay, my very life, in your hands.

HICK. Young man, I *am* a governor—fear nothing—your honour is in my keeping; tell me the culprit's name.

TREVOR. He is—I am sorry to say it—he is my—my own captain.

HICK. The devil he is! I see, he's to share in the spoil. But

how comes it, he suffered the real lady to come with the escort, instead of the pretended one?

TREVOR. Simply, because he was on board when your faithful messenger arrived; and the negro's superior penetration immediately detected the difference between the real and pretended Miss Somerdown.

HICK. Neb's a clever fellow; and it was lucky your rascal of a captain was out of the way, or Neb's sagacity might have been overreached. Give me your hand, my fine fellow. I'll tickle 'em to some tune, I warrant me. ~~music.~~ Here she comes! Here comes Miss Somerdown! Egad, I feel all of a twitter. Courage, Hickory—courage!

~~Music~~ and procession.—A grand march—LETTY is borne on in great state, C. from L., as she passes, the GUARD salute her, by presenting arms—she starts at the rattle of their muskets. *For 15*

NEB. (C.) Here she is, Massa gubbernor! Here de gubbernor's lady. (*goes up.*)

HICK. (R. C.) Allow me, madam. (*in running to assist her from the palanquin, his sword gets between his legs, he stumbles.*) D—n the sword! I beg ten thousand pardons, madam, but—(*hands her out.*)

LETTY. (L.—*aside.*) The poor dear gentleman was near on his nose. Sir—I—you—oh, Lord! I'm completely electrified.

HICK. (*aside.*) What shall I say to her? Madam—this unexpected honour—no, not unexpected, because I knew you were coming, but—(*aside to TREVOR.*) Zounds! She's an uncommon pretty creature!

TREVOR. (R.) Isn't she?

LETTY. (*stealing a glance at HICKORY.*) What a nice little chap of a governor! I expected to see an old fellow, as tall and as stiff as a halbert.

HICK. I say, come here. (*to TREVOR.*) She expects me to say something to her, I suppose—something tender, as I'm to be her husband—eh? Now, I'm a rough warrior, and these things are not much in my way—how shall I begin?

TREVOR. By swearing eternal affection for her, and that her arms have struck you dumb.

HICK. (*aside to him.*) D—d nonsense! If I'm dumb, how am I to talk to her? (*to himself.*) Hickory—Hickory Short, for the credit of your master, don't make a fool of yourself. So here goes. Madam—(*touching her elbow with his cane.*)

LETTY. (*starting.*) Lord, sir!

HICK. You are—yes, you are an angel—a—you are—you are welcome to Surinam.

LETTY. (*curtseying.*) Thank you, sir.

HICK. You are welcome to the governor's house!

LETTY. Thank you, sir.

HICK. You are welcome to the governor's heart!!

LETTY. Thank you, sir.

HICK. You are welcome to the governor's arms!!!

(opens them.)

LETTY. Thank you kindly, sir.

TREVOR. *(up centre.)* Sweet bashful modesty! you are welcome to the governor's arms.

LETTY. Eh! *(looking at HICKORY'S open arms.)*

TREVOR. To the governor's arms. *(leads her to him.)*

LETTY. Oh! *(sinks into HICKORY'S arms.)*

HICK. *(aside.)* Oh, dear! This lovely creature is resting her head upon my bosom. Hickory! Hickory! you are carrying your powers of persuasion too far for your master's peace and interest. *(aloud.)* Look up, lovely maiden.

LETTY. Oh—I'm all over in a miz-maze! This fine house, this duck of a governor, these soldiers, servants—eat off gold and silver, dabble in rosewater, see the gold fishes wag their tails—delicious! Heavenly! Everything swims before me! I see nothing, because all I behold is a dissolving view! *(sinks in HICKORY'S arms.)*

HICK. Here—here—help all of you! the lady is fainting! salts! brandy! anything—everything here! *(the GIRLS apply bottles to her nose, fan her, &c.)*

LETTY. *(recovering.)* Excuse my weakness, governor! Governor, can you forgive this childish sensibility?

HICK. Rather say, this angelic modesty—but be composed, and look on me as your future husband. Let us change the subject. And how is your worthy father?

LETTY. Thank you, but my worthy father has been dead ten years.

HICK. Dead!

TREVOR. *(aside.)* Confound her unlucky tongue! *(aloud, L. H.)* Yes, yes—dead! her father is dead—that is—dead to the world, through unavoidable misfortunes—that's what you mean, madam? *(significantly to her.)*

LETTY. Yes, he was unfortunate, after his failure in the cheese and bacon line in Barbican, he—

HICK. Cheese and bacon!

TREVOR. Yes, yes—her poor father, when first he lost part of his fortune, turned provision merchant on a large scale, and—

LETTY. Yes, and the scales went against him; for when the Annoyance Jury found out that the scales had got a false weight

underneath, to the tune of an-ounce-and-a-half, why they took away scales and weights and all.

HICK. Weights and scales!

TREVOR. Ay, ay. The lady's meaning is, that—that when her father's fortunes were weighed in the *scales* of Hope—alas, the *balance* was not in his favour! Eh, madam?

LETTY. You may say that—he lost his balance altogether, after the jury's visit; and them *scales* was a dead *weight* to him as long as he lived—after that he peaked and pined away; but if he'd dwelt on this blessed earth for twenty years longer, and grown as big as Daniel Lambert, he'd never have got over the ounce-and-a-half weight.

HICK. Big as Daniel Lambert, and only an-ounce-and-a-half weight! Why your father must be an uncommon strange old gentleman.

TREVOR. (*aside.*) I must stop her tongue, at all events. (*aloud.*) The lady hints, but in the most sensitive manner, that her dear father, from a large estate, dwindled to nothing at last.

LETTY. Oh! a regular skilinton! Before he went off he was quite a'notomy, as a body may say.

Enter SERVANT, C., from L. U. E.

SERVANT. Captain Holystone, and a young lady, to wait on you, governor.

HICK. Shew 'em up.

Exit SERVANT, L. U. E.

Ah! the old dog is come, with the pretended lady, to begin his operations. (*aloud to LETTY.*) My dear madam, whatever you see and hear, be under no apprehension. I'll counteract and blow their machinations to the devil! I'll—

Enter MISS SOMERDOWN and CAPTAIN, C., L. U. E.

CAPTAIN. Cheer up, my dear. I believe I have the honour of talking to the governor.

HICK. (R. C.) Exactly so—and what then?

CAPTAIN. (L. C.) What then!—very odd! Then, governor, if your servant made a mistake in announcing me, I beg to announce myself, Captain Holystone, of the Firefly, to your excellency's notice.

HICK. Oh! I know you well enough—and who have you got there?

CAPTAIN. This lady is Miss Emily Somerdown—the lady you expect, the daughter of your old friend, Somerdown, in London.

HICK. Indeed! Ha! Dont you think you're making a little mistake? Ha! ha! ha!

CAPTAIN. (*aside.*) Curse his grinning! (*aloud.*) No, sir, I have not made any mistake, except that of hoping to find you a gentleman. But I forgot—I forgot—I beg your pardon. I believe you are smarting under the discovery of some foolish mistake, owing, I believe, to your messenger's stupidity. My love, I have, according to your father's desire, brought you safely into the presence of your future husband.

MISS S. (L.) That person. (*glancing at HICKORY.*) Dear sir—

CAPTAIN. Yes. That queer fish of a fellow! I certainly am disappointed in my man; but there he is, and make the most of him. Well, governor, are you satisfied?

HICK. Oh, yes, anything satisfies me; I'm fond of a joke. Bring twenty young women here, if you like—and take them back again, if you like—so do what you please, and say what you please, all's one to the governor. Ha! ha! ha!

CAPTAIN. If you're ruffled at your servant's mistake, that's no fault of mine. I only tell you I have brought the real Miss Somerdown here, for you to marry, and—

HICK. But I tell you the real Miss Somerdown is here already. I shall marry, if I please, without your interference.

CAPTAIN. But I tell you—

HICK. (*both go up, c., squabbling.*) Yes, and I tell you—

LETTY. (*goes to c.*) I smell a rat. As sure as eggs is eggs, I've been mistaken for my fellow-passenger. Oh, Lord! I'd better know all about this business. I say, you come here. (*to TREVOR.*) Ain't I here by mistake?

TREVOR. (R.—*to LETTY.*) Yes! but stand your ground, and you'll marry the governor.

LETTY. But why didn't you tell the governor I wasn't that young lady? (*pointing to EMILY.*)

TREVOR. Because—because—

LETTY. I see. Because you want to marry her yourself, and play a trick with my little governor, eh?

TREVOR. My dear Letty, you have fathomed the secret, and all you have to do is to stick to your assumed character.

LETTY. I will, as long as the governor has a gold fish in his ponds. (*goes up, c.*)

HICK. (*coming down, c.*) Sir, are you aware that you're imposing on a governor—and that I have the power of punishing an impostor?

CAPTAIN. (R. c.) A what!—an impostor! Powder and shot! Barrels and bullets! Honor and hair triggers! Impostor! Damme! (*to TREVOR.*) What do you stand grinning there for? Come forward, you jackanapes, and tell the governor who this lady really is. (*pulls him forward.*)

TREVOR. Nay, sir. If the governor will not take the word of a captain the word of a first lieutenant will avail nothing.

CAPTAIN. Is this Miss Somerdown or not, sir?

TREVOR. You say so, sir—and, of course, if you say so, she must be.

CAPTAIN. (*mimics him.*) "Of course, if you say so, she must be." Why, damme, she *is*. Come forth, madam (*crosses to her.*) and say—are you Miss Somerdown, or not?

LETTY. (*close to her, on her L.*) Say no! (*goes back again.*)

MISS S. No—that is, yes—yes—*yes*.

CAPTAIN. No—and yes! What the devil do *you* mean?

HICK. That your scholar is very bad at her lesson, and shrinks, as she ought to do, at the indelicate situation into which you have placed her.

CAPTAIN. It's a lie! I never dreamt of placing her in an indelicate situation. One's as bad as the other—all false—deceitful—

HICK. Treacherous captain, you deceive yourself—and, to your confusion, here, here is Miss Somerdown to put you down.
(*bringing down LETTY on his R., and pats her.*)

CAPTAIN. Oh! she has told her story, has she? She has imposed on your messenger—I saw her fine feathers in the palanquin. One word, madam, (*to LETTY.*) and I have done with questions. What brought you here?

LETTY. Why, you know you brought me here, to get married.

CAPTAIN. Well, I can't deny but I did bring you here to get a husband. Yes, yes, that was the intention of your voyage, I confess.

LETTY. Very well, then; say you are sorry for what you have done, and go about your business.

CAPTAIN. This is my business. Fred—why the devil don't you speak?

TREVOR. I'm very sorry, sir. (*goes up stage.*)

CAPTAIN. You look very sorrowful, sir. (*crosses.*) And you are very sorry, too, I suppose, madam? (*to EMILY.*)

MISS S. Indeed I am sorry that this deception should be pursued so far—therefore—

LETTY. Yes, my poor girl, it has been carried too far, yet not far enough to answer the purpose. You see, my dear governor, the young woman confesses to the deception.

HICK. She does—she does.

CAPTAIN. She doesn't. She means that you are not she—that is, that you and her are not the same—that— I am half mad—and that stupid-looking governor is a fool—and—whew!

—I shall be suffocated with rage! I have it—I have it! If you are Miss Somerdown, you have a letter from your father to the governor, (*to LETTY.*) and that letter I saw you, madam, place in your reticule. (*to EMILY.*) Now, whoever is the real young lady, has the letter of course. I think I've got you now, haven't I?—and what do you say to that?

(*during this, TREVOR has hastily snatched Letty's reticule from her, and running round back, unperceived by the rest, takes Miss Somerdown's bag, and gives it to LETTY, having thrust Letty's into the other's hand.*)

LETTY. And what do you say to this? (*holding up a letter, which she has taken from the bag.*) Here is the very letter my honoured father gave me, with his own blessed hands, before I placed my foot in your vicked wessel, you pirate of the seas.

CAPTAIN. It's stolen, or a forgery! As the French say—that letter is a wicked *ruse*.

LETTY. No—as the French say, it's a *letter de catchee*.

HICK. Yes, and it has caught you, captain. I am a governor, ahem! (*crosses to him.*) and ought to admonish with kindness, rather than punish with severity. I shall therefore reprimand and dismiss you. Why seek to injure the unfortunate?

LETTY. (*R. H.—whimpering.*) Ay, why indeed?

HICK. Why take advantage of a young lady's unfortunate and peculiar situation, to—to—would I could say what I mean—detached from her friends, she is severed from her connections; placed in a strange town, she is a stranger to the country. When a captain cannot command his passions, he's too passionate to be a commander, and—

CAPTAIN. You be d—d, and your jawing tacks too. Now I'll talk to *you*. If you've any pluck in you, follow me, and give me satisfaction. (*goes up, C.*)

HICK. Eh?

CAPTAIN. Fifteen paces—ten—five—muzzle to muzzle—and I'll blow your governorship to the devil.

HICK. You are beneath my arm—go—go—go.

CAPTAIN. Governor—garrison—guards—town council—here—here; bring 'em here, and I'll fight 'em all! I see it's a combination against me! A plot! I see you want to marry a beggar; (*to TREVOR, L. C.*) do, do, and she'll marry another. You'll marry that fool of a governor; (*to LETTY, R.*) and I hope you'll make a greater fool of him after, than before marriage. I disclaim you all! I renounce you!

NEB. (*C.*) He! he! he! Oh, Golly! Golly!

CAPTAIN. I—get out of the way, you, infernal black son of Lucifer. *Encountering NEB, and rushing off, C. and L.*

MISS S. (L.) Surely, Frederick, you cannot suffer him to go away in this passion ; remember, he is you uncle, and—

LETTY. Hush ! young woman. The ways of Providence is great. 'Tis thus wickedness is punished, and virtue rewarded.

HICK. Very sensibly said, my dear. An old cut-throat, to dare to call a man in my situation out ! But let him go ; and this poor deluded young woman shall remain under our protection.

LETTY. To be sure ; and marry this young gentleman, if she likes. And, when I am your wife—

HICK. Yes, my love.

LETTY. You must give them something handsome, as a marriage portion, or a snug place, with some pretty pickings, under government.

HICK. Yes, yes ; that can be talked about when my master—I mean—when I'm your lord and master, eh ? Ha, ha !

LETTY. Yes, I know. Oh ! you coaxer !

HICK. Pretty creature !

LETTY. Will you always love me ?

HICK. Love you ! Would I could love you as I ought !

LETTY. And will you very soon make me your wife ?

HICK. I will, I will. She loves me ! Why has Fate placed me in so delicate a situation ? All is despair on one side—all is—
—all is delight when I gaze on her, on the other—I doubt, I fear, I—oh !—

LETTY. You seem agitated, my dear governor.

HICK. No, no, only the cares of government, the toils of state ; but your smiles, your eyes ! Oh, my eyes ! I wish I was at the bottom of a horse pond. ~~music to end of act~~ But hark ! The officers of the palace wish to offer their congratulations on your arrival.

LETTY. Do they, though ?

HICK. Will you allow me the honour of your hand, to lead you to some slight refreshment ?

LETTY. Oh, with all the pleasures in life. Officers ! palace ! oh, crikey ! I'm completely nonplushed with wonder and delight !

HICK. Lovely lady, your hand. Friends, you will follow on to the saloon !

(he leads her to the arch at top. Music has been playing piano through this dialogue, but swells into a loud strain as they go up. All the characters cry "Long live the governor—long live the governor's lady." As HICKORY and LETTY reach the top.)

A C T I I

SCENE I.—*Same as last scene.**Enter HICKORY, C. from R.*

HICK. My situation is becoming dangerously critical to my peace and place—this lady would marry me—but what if I forget duty, wages, obedience to master's commands, and marry the young syren? Should I wed the governor's intended wife—I should be tried for treason, and hanged for a new species of government robbery. Yet how can I resist her wishes—her beautiful endearments? She fascinates me with her rattlesnake eyes—and my resolves are swallowed up at a single glance! But no—I must be firm. As the fellow in the play says—“Love may move the man, but the governor is fixed.”

Enter NEB, hurriedly, C. from L., with a letter, and runs against HICKORY.

NEB. Oh, Massa Hickory, here a letter for you. (*gives it him.*) Golly, massa, but de lady ax where you be—where be de dear gubbernor, she say—where him hide him from my eye. Ha, ha, ha! Ecod! Massa Hickory, you make a large hole in her lilly heart, afore gubbernor come home. She hate him worse dan pison, when she lose you, and see a old gentleman for her chum-chum.

HICK. Why, yes, Neb. I have reason to believe my person has made an impression in her bosom.

NEB. Iss, massa—de 'pression is dere, as if it was done wid de gubbernor's great seal. Dere you is, from de cocked hat to de jack boot, stamped on her pretty lilly heart.

HICK. I fear so, Neb; and it was very foolish of the governor to trust me in regimentals, as a lady is concerned; independent of setting off a good figure to great advantage—a military man is sure to make his way into a woman's affections.

NEB. Iss, massa—and now she lub you so dearly, old gubbernor find she dam troublesome, I 'fraid, after him marry her.

HICK. Well, Neb, he must take the consequences of his indiscretion—hem! I forgot the letter! (*opens it.*) As I live—from the governor, Neb! Listen. (*reads.*) “I understand the lady is arrived, and in the palace—but as I wish to make

myself personally acquainted with her habits and disposition, I shall soon follow this—incog."

NEB. In—cog! what sort of a conveyance be dat, Massa?

HICK. It means disguise—concealment, Neb. (*reads.*) "Therefore, when I make my appearance among you, call me Mr. Brown, and take no further notice of me, but as a friend dropt in to ask you how you do."

NEB. How do you do—berry good.

HICK. "As Miss Somerdown is young, sensitive, and altogether her situation a noble one,"—No, no, I mean a novel one—"a novel one, I hope you have been very delicate in your attentions to her." Alas! too delicate. "In so hot a climate as this, pray recommend to her the genteest exercise." No, I mean the *gentlest* exercise. Gentle exercise! If dancing like mad, and running round the fish-ponds, be gentle exercise, she's had enough of it. "Water your steps in the way of gallantry." Water my steps in the way of gallantry! What does he mean by that? Oh! I see—"Whatever your steps in the ways of gallantry may be, under your assumed character of governor, according to my directions, I hope they have been taken, without alarming Miss Somerdown's tim—tim—ti—id—ity!" Oh! timidity—timidity! If I have taken any steps towards her, I'm hanged if she hasn't met me half way. "Be prudent, and I will reward you, and shall touch my intended wife"—No, no—"teach my intended wife to ap—pre—ci—ate"—ay, "appreciate your services.—The Governor." I think she does appreciate them pretty well, without your teaching, old gentleman. Now, Neb, be off and tell the servants and people not to know master, but as Mr. Brown. You understand?

NEB. Iss—and old gubbernor understand something too, I fancy, afore him done wid dis business. *Exit C. and R.*

HICK. Coming here in cog! Ecod, I've a great mind to let him see what I can do in the way of tickling a lady's fancy, and pay him off for his mean opinion of me. (*sits at table, R.*) But no—I must be circumspect, or I shall lose my place, and that will be as bad as losing the little jade, dearly as I love her. (*sighs.*) As I hope for whole bones, here comes that blood-thirsty old captain, with a case of pistols! He's after me, and if he finds me, he'll want me, as governor, to give him satisfaction, and that I can never do in his way. What shall I do? I have it—I'll set Neb to watch his motions slyly, and counteract, if possible, his horrible intention.

Exit R., having left the letter on the table.

Enter CAPTAIN HOLYSTONE, L. C., with a case of pistols.

CAPTAIN. So I have at length found time to call this precious governor to account—and my nephew, too. I'll—but

first let me settle scores with that impudent scoundrel of a governor, who dared to tax me as an impostor—an impostor! charge me with imposition! Fire and fury! I shall—whew! I can't speak! Lie quietly there, my dears, till I call on you to speak for me. (*placing the pistols on the table.*) Oh! that I had the old maligner here! And here I'll sit till he does come. (*throws himself in the chair occupied by HICKORY.*) And when I see him he shall give me satisfaction, or beg my pardon, he shall, or I—eh! I—(*drumming with his fingers on the table, with impatience and vexation, his eye accidentally falls on the letter left by HICKORY.*) I certainly do see Miss Somerdown's name—it is! Hollo! what's all this about? I shall take the liberty of looking at anything that concerns her, as matters stand. (*comes forward with the letter and reads.*) Um—em—“Lady arrived—soon follow this, incog.”—em—“appearance among you—call me Mr. Brown, and—um—even your assumed character—” assumed character of governor! I'll read that again. (*during this, NEB has been anxiously watching the CAPTAIN at back, and when he comes down to read the letter, quickly, yet perfectly apparent to the Audience, draws the charge from each pistol, replaces them silently—and creeps off through the archway, R.—all of course, unobserved by the CAPTAIN.*) “As Miss Somerdown is young, sensitive, and—situation—um—under your assumed character of governor, according to my directions—um—” “The Governor.” Why, who is this addressed to? To Mr. Hickory Short—Palace—confidential.” Ha, ha, ha! Zounds! the fellow's no governor, after all. Ay, ay—has been left by accident, and Mr. Brown, then, is the real governor. Ha, ha, ha! Nobody knows anything about this but myself. Now I'm aware who the fellow is, I'll humour the joke, and let him marry Letty; and as for the real Simon Pure, I'll teach him to play his second-hand tricks on a lady.

HICKORY. (*without, R. C., in a violent passion.*) Oh! He's come with his pistols, is he? With all my heart. Where is he?

TREVOR. (*without.*) Governor, be patient. I tell you I will adjust this affair

HICKORY. (*without.*) Never, never! My honour must be satisfied!

Enter HICKORY, vapouring, followed by TREVOR, and NEB, R. C.

HICK (*aside to NEB.*) You're sure you've drawn the charge of both pistols?

NEB. (R.) Both of 'em, massa.

HICK. Hem! So, Captain, you are here again, are you? And brought pistols, I perceive. You come to demand satisfac-

tion, I suppose? You can have it now, on the spot, if you like—damme!

CAPTAIN. Nonsense—nonsense, it's all over. I don't want to fight *you*. (*smiling.*)

HICK. There—there, he's trying to shirk off, and is growing afraid of the vengeance of my arm. (*aside to NEB.*) Are you sure, Neb? very sure you drew the charge from both pistols?

NEB. (*aside to him.*) All right, Massa, swagger away like de debbil.

HICK. (*aside.*) I will, as there's no danger. Are you ready for the mortal strife?

CAPTAIN. Oh, quite—if you *will* have a bullet in your gizzard.

TREVOR. Psha! This ridiculous affair must go no farther.

HICK. What do you mean?

TREVOR. You are determined, you say, to have satisfaction of the captain?

HICK. I am!

TREVOR. And you, uncle?

CAPTAIN. Oh, I'll blow him to the devil with the greatest pleasure in life!

TREVOR. Then to prevent bloodshed, I must—though it mar Letty's good fortune, and my own hopes, tell you, governor, that this lady, brought here by Neb, is not the real Miss Somer-down, but that the other lady is.

NEB. Dat a great big whopper. No, Massa Gubbernor, him only say so to save him old captain.

HICK. I see—I see. You connive lieutenant with the captain, to save his worthless life; but my honour must be satisfied. (*takes pistols from the table, and goes to R. U. E.*) Fifteen paces—take your place.

CAPTAIN. Ha, ha, ha! But I assure you I have no animosity, and if—

HICK. Must I call you coward?

CAPTAIN. By no means in the world. Fred, you be my second; and Neb, there, can act for the governor.

TREVOR. Uncle, dear uncle, should you fall, I—I have been the unhappy cause—

CAPTAIN. No matter—no matter, as well now as any other time. I could have wished my opponent to have been—but a man's a man, so give me a pistol. (*TREVOR gives pistol to CAPTAIN.*) I can tell you they are loaded.

HICK. (*aside to NEB.*) Are they? Neb—Neb, are you quite sure—

NEB. (*aside to him.*) Noting in a pistols, as sure as a gun.

HICK. Now, captain, I'm a man of honour. I've challenged you, and give you the advantage of the first fire.

CAPTAIN. All fair and square, and I'll wing you, my little hero, depend on't. (*aside.*) I'm ready, Fred.

TREVOR. Since it must be—fire! (CAPTAIN *snaps the pistol.*)

HICK. (*assuming great courage.*) Well, why the devil don't you fire?

CAPTAIN. It's a miss. Now you have a pop at *me*.

HICK. No, no—fire away. You see I am not afraid of a second trial. Ha, ha! have another shy.

CAPTAIN. No—blaze away, my fine fellow, and don't make such a miss of it as I did.

HICK. Then here goes. (*snaps his pistol.*) Why, mine's a miss, too!

CAPTAIN. Allow me. I know I loaded them well. (*blows in the barrels.*) Gone—gone! even to percussion caps! Why, how in the devil's name—

HICK. I see, I see, your fighting days are all over, noble captain. They're your own pistols, you see; but I'm satisfied, and—

CAPTAIN. But I'm not. They're empty—but how they came so, I can't tell; however, the shortest way is to load them again.

NEB. (*aside.*) Oh, golly!

HICK. (*aside.*) The devil! (*aloud.*) No, no! I'm satisfied. I—you—you merely made a mistake about loading them—we *tried* to fire, and we *couldn't*, and there's an end of the matter.

CAPTAIN. Well, but—(*they retire up c.*)

TREVOR. There's something very odd in all this. (*seeing NEB grinning, R.*) Come here, sir. (*calls him to c.*) What are you grinning about?

NEB. Me tell you—no tell again. Me get a pistols and draw the charge; den I put 'em back again—captain know noting about it.

TREVOR. Oh, oh! Neb, you're a fine fellow, and fit for a governor, yourself. (*they separate R. and L.*) Well, gentlemen, have you adjusted your differences?

HICK. I hope so, with all my heart. But the noble captain *appears* to wish for a second shot—now I am perfectly satisfied.

CAPTAIN. You seem to be perfectly satisfied, as there's no danger, and I could almost suspect—

HICK. Suspect! Your own pistols, placed on that table by your own hands. But still I am satisfied; you thought you'd loaded them, but you hadn't, that's all.

TREVOR. Yes! you thought you'd loaded them, but you hadn't. Ha, ha!

HICK (*laughing with him.*) Ha, ha! That's all.

CAPTAIN. No, that's not all, my fine governor. I shall

have my laugh by-and-bye. In the mean time, give me your hand. Marry the girl, and may she find herself no more deceived by you, than you are in her.

TREVOR. (*aside.*) And do you really give your consent to the governor marrying Letty?

CAPTAIN. With all my heart and soul.

TREVOR. Bravo! And also, my dear uncle, to my marrying Emily?

CAPTAIN. No. The consent of a third person is necessary for that, and—

Enter GOVERNOR, C. from L.

HICK. (*aside.*) Zounds! the governor! (*aloud.*) Ah! how do you do, Mr. Brown? gentlemen, a particular friend of mine, Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown—Captain Holystone and Lieutenant Trevor.

GOVER. I merely called, in passing, governor, to say how do you do? So, the lady you expected is arrived, and I hope to offer her my congratulations.

HICK. By all means, gov—Mr. Brown, I mean. Neb, request Miss Somerdown to step here for a few minutes.

Exit NEB, R. C. TREVOR goes up L.

CAPTAIN. (*aside.*) Mr. Brown—ah! This is the real governor.

GOVER. (*aside.*) I'm glad I shall meet this interesting girl under my disguise; for even as it is, my heart palpitates at the very idea of beholding her.

Enter LETTY, running, followed by NEB, C. from R. She runs against the GOVERNOR.

LETTY. Stand out of the way, old gentleman. He's safe, he's safe! (*clasp*ing HICKORY.) Ah, governor, how could you put me in such a orrid fright? They told me you were gone to fight a duel, and I've been sitting as a gentleman did at a picnic party, on knives and forks, as a body may say.

HICK. A gentleman, Miss Somerdown—a particular friend of mine, who has called to congratulate you on your arrival at Surinam.

LETTY. And well he may congratulate me, for I'd a precious rough voyage of it. Ah, sir, when I left my poor dear mother—

GOVER. Your mother! I thought, Miss Somerdown, she died many years since.

LETTY. (*aside.*) Oh, dear! I forgot I'm not myself. (*aloud.*) Yes, yes—quite right, Mr. Thingammy. I mean my beloved papa.

GOVER. Mr. Thingammy! I hope, Miss Somerdown, you now feel perfectly recovered from the effects of your voyage.

LETTY. Quite—thank you. Good eating and drinking, sleeping on silk cushions, dancing and running about the grounds, and a moonlight stroll with my dear charming governor here, has made me as lively and as frisky as a young kid.

(dances over to R.)

GOVER. (aside.) A young kid! Surely I am dreaming.

CAPTAIN. (aside and eyeing GOVERNOR.) 'Ha! What, you begin to wince already, do you, old boy?

HICK. (aside to GOVERNOR.) Isn't she an engaging young lady, sir?

GOVER. Very.

CAPTAIN. (on the other side of him.) A fine spirited delightful creature, eh, Mr. Brown.

GOVER. Uncommonly so; and—and you have been very merry and happy, then, since you arrived here?

LETTY. Merry as a cricket, and happy as a mouse in a Cheshire cheese; and all I want now to complete my happiness is, my union with this dear—this duck of a governor. (embraces HICKORY.)

GOVER. (aside.) I am struck dumb with amazement.

HICK. (aside to LETTY.) I say, miss, pray don't express your feelings quite so much in my favour before—before company.

LETTY. La! Everybody knows you sent for me to marry me: and as we have taken a liking for each other, we'll be the happiest pair that was ever made one. Don't you think we shall make a tolerable couple, Mr. Brown?

GOVER. Very tolerable, indeed. (aside.) 'Sdeath and disappointment! How could old Somerdown send me such a daughter as this?

CAPTAIN. (to himself.) Ha, ha, ha! Capital, capital!

HICK. (aside to GOVERNOR.) I can see you're struck with the lady, sir. Oh, if you could but hear her sing, and see her lance—she does one quite as well as the other.

GOVER. I don't doubt it.

HICK. Shall I ask her to give us a song?

GOVER. By all means. Pray let us know all the lady's accomplishments.

HICK. Miss Somerdown, my friend, Mr. Brown, will feel delighted to hear you sing.

LETTY. Will he? Oh, by all means. Neb, that's a nice little song you learnt me, I'll sing that—so get your banjo.

(NEB gets banjo, R. 1. E.)

GOVER. (aside.) A banjo! Mercy on me, what an accompaniment.

LETTY. Now then. Neb. I've got a bad cold, but never mind—may our endeavours to please be crowned with success.

SONG.—AIR, "Ohio Boatmen's song."

The boatmen dance, the boatmen sing,
The boatmen up to everyting.
When the boatmen come on shore,
He spends all his money, and works for more
Dance, boatmen dance,
Dance all night in the broad moonlight,
And go home wid the girls in the morning.

The boatmen dance, de boatmen sing,
De boatmen up to everyting.
I never see a pretty girl in my life,
But what she was a boatman's wife.

Dance, boatmen dance,
Dance all night in the broad moonlight,
And go home wid the girls in the morning.

(*at the end of every verse, LETTY dances with NEB; and HICKORY, unable to restrain himself, begins to dance also, but is held back by the GOVERNOR, who forces him into a chair, in c.*)

HICK. Charming, sir! Isn't it, sir?

GOVER. Very charming!

CAPTAIN. Delightful! eh, Mr. Brown?

GOVER. Oh, delicious! (*aside*) Old Somerdown must be in his dotage—perfectly insane.

LETTY. Well, Mr. Whatd'yecall'um, Brown, though you're not a very lively concern—yet you're a good sort of a creature, I dare say, when one's better acquainted with you, so—

HICK. (*frightened at her forwardness.*) Oh, my dear madam—

LETTY. Hold your tongue, governor. I'm frank and free, something like my friend Brown, I've a notion. (*crosses to GOVERNOR.*) If I'm no great shakes at first sight, I improve as I get known—therefore, what do you say? Will you come and shake a leg at our wedding?

GOVER. Shake a leg!

HICK. Oh, no, no, no!

LETTY. And I say yes, yes. I shall delight in making my husband's friends happy and comfortable.

GOVER. Then, I suppose you have fixed the wedding day?

HICK. (*earnestly.*) No, sir, upon my honour we haven't. I never thought of such a thing, I'm sure.

LETTY. But I have, and shall expect the honour of entertaining all present. Come, Mr. Brown, you shall be father, and give me away.

HICK. Oh, Lord, no. I—dear me—

LETTY. He shall. I've taken a fancy to him, and what I means I says—and now, father, have I your consent? (*coaxingly to GOVERNOR.*)

GOVER. What, to marry the governor, there?

LETTY. Ay.

GOVER. Certainly; you have my consent.

HICK. What to—me to marry—eh?

GOVER. Yes; and as a friend of your father, Miss Somer-down, I present you with a marriage portion. Here are bills to the amount of £2,000, but more you must never expect from me. (*aside.*) And heaven knows, glad to get rid of you at so cheap a rate.

LETTY. No apologies; I'm sure I didn't expect *this* from you. (*to HICKORY, aside.*) I say, governor, if all your friends round this quarter are such trumps, I shall be happy to make the whole circle of their acquaintance. I declare I'm in such excellent spirits! Good-bye, Mr. Brown, good-bye, till I see you again. Come along, governor, we'll go and talk about the wedding liveries, and the fine coaches, and the fine clothes, and horses, and—oh, delicious! Neb, strike up; and lieutenant, as you've nothing else to do, you and I, and the governor here, will have a three-handed reel.

TREVOR. (C. L.) With all my heart. Captain, will you shake a toe? Mr. Brown, will you dance?

GOVER. Dance! No, no, thank you. (*goes up a little.*)

TREVOR. Uncle, you will?

CAPTAIN Get out, you impudent scoundrel! (*goes away to L.*)

LETTY. Lieutenant, you're a fine fellow, and I'll make the governor do something handsome for you. Come, governor, dance.

HICK. No, no.

LETTY. Yes, yes. Strike up, Neb.

NEB. Iss, missy. Golly, what fun!

(NEB plays—LETTY, HICKORY, and TREVOR dance till they dance off, C. and R.)

Re-enter TREVOR, laughing, C.

CAPTAIN. I see, Mr. Brown, you relish this happiness and merriment, to your very heart.

GOVER. (R.) I do; I think it uncommonly amusing.

TREVOR. (*aside to CAPTAIN.*) I say, Captain, as Mr. Brown is the governor's friend, and a well-wisher to Letty, suppose we let him into the secret about mistaking the right lady.

CAPTAIN. (L.) Ay, suppose we do.

TREVOR. (C.) I see he enjoys a quiet piece of drollery.

CAPTAIN. And I have no doubt of *his* being pleased, whatever you may be, you dog.

TREVOR. Shall I tell him?

CAPTAIN. Oh, yes; it must be known, and Mr. Brown may as well have a share of the fun now, as at a future time.

TREVOR. I say, Mr. Brown, I see you like a joke, and I'll let you into a little secret. You may perceive that the governor loves his intended bride, that you may see.

GOVER. Oh, yes, clearly.

TREVOR. And that he will marry her, of course?

GOVER. Yes.

TREVOR. So that you see—ha! ha! ha!—no harm will come of it, when he discovers that he is going to be married to the wrong girl.

GOVER. The wrong girl!

TREVOR. The wrong girl.

CAPTAIN. (*aside.*) Yes, and you'll find yourself in the wrong box, presently.

TREVOR. True, upon my honour. The unlucky messenger that headed the escort, to accompany the lady here, made a mistake between *two* ladies, and poor Neb, fancying that the gayest bird must be the best, was betrayed by the feathers, and insisted on bringing away Letty Briggs, instead of Miss Somerdown. Ha, ha, ha! a good joke, isn't it?

GOVER. I think so; and Miss Somerdown, then—

TREVOR. Is also here, and is, without exception, the loveliest, most accomplished, and fascinating girl, that ever blessed the heart and eye of man.

GOVER. Indeed! Can I see Miss Somerdown? I am also an old friend of her father, and—

TREVOR. Certainly, certainly. I'll say her father's old friend wishes to see her. Come along, captain. (*aside to CAPTAIN.*) This is a rich old fellow, you may see, by his present to Letty; and perhaps he'll do something handsome for Emily.

CAPTAIN. No doubt of it.

TREVOR. I'm sure he'll be delighted with her.

CAPTAIN. Yes, yes, that's certain.

TREVOR. Take her under his protection, perhaps, being her father's old friend.

CAPTAIN. Not unlikely.

TREVOR. Adopt her—fix her fortunes for ever.

CAPTAIN. You may be sure he will.

TREVOR. Oh, what a friend to stumble over! Come along, my dear uncle, and love and hope be my motto still. Mr. Brown, I'll send Miss Somerdown immediately.

Exit with CAPTAIN, C. and R.

GOVER. Ha, ha, ha! a good joke, indeed—an excellent joke. I imagined all my hopes were over, but now—the joke, though, has cost me £2,000—well, no matter. I owe Hickory something for his services, and that will do for his marriage portion. I am delighted! Miss Somerdown will now become inclined to obey her father's wishes, I flatter myself, after her knowledge of, and rejection by my vulgar representative. Here she comes; a lovely creature, indeed!

Enter MISS SOMERDOWN, C. from R.

GOVER. Your servant, madam.

MISS S. I understand, from Mr. Trevor, sir, that you wish to see me. As a friend of my dear father—

GOVER. Miss Somerdown, pray be seated. (*they sit.*) I have heard of this ridiculous mistake made by the governor's messenger, and the total annihilation of your father's hopes, in regard to the purpose for which you visited Surinam.

MISS S. Ay, annihilation of his hopes, indeed! Oh, sir, in England I have encountered every privation to avert from my father the bitter sting of utter poverty, and absolute want. Gracious Providence, shall I ever hear his dear, dear voice again?

GOVER. Hope for the best, sweet girl.

MISS S. I did hope for the best, sir, although my young heart was crushed; yet I hid all under the semblance of cheerfulness, and bade adieu to my father with a smiling face and an aching heart, hoping to release him from his embarrassments, by becoming the wife of his friend.

GOVER. Good and lovely sufferer; go on with your little history.

MISS S. Judge of my astonishment when, pardon me, I found the governor, your friend, so unlike the gentleman my dear father's partiality had pictured; yet even repugnance at his manners, dislike to his person, and, I may say, horror at his vulgarity, all should have sunk before my father's necessities; but his mistake of the lady, and partiality for his selection, renders the fulfilment of my duty impossible, and my poor father will end his days in a prison.

GOVER. Not so, Miss Somerdown; your manners, your loveliness, your affection for your father, have wrought an interest in my bosom, warmer even than admiration. In one word, I am very rich, as rich as the governor, have known your father, and will relieve him from his embarrassments. In short, I will do all that the governor intended, if you consent to become my wife.

MISS S. Now, heaven help me, for I am fearfully tempted! Hear me, sir. When I left my father, my heart was unengaged—

during a long voyage, the attentions of Lieutenant Trevor won my esteem—his declaration of love, mine in return. I have no affection to bestow on another, and you would receive my hand, and a breaking heart.

GOVER. Nay, nay ; I trust time would render my attentions somewhat necessary to your happiness. Remember that your father is involved so deeply in debt, that nothing but assistance like mine can save him from a prison.

MISS S. I know it, I know it.

GOVER. Become my wife, and your father's life will pass in peace and affluence.

MISS S. Oh, Trevor—father !

GOVER. One word will decide your father's fate. Will you be mine ? Say yes, and even before marriage I will remit your father a sum sufficient to save him from a gaol. Will you be mine ?

MISS S. I will—I—I feel I must.

GOVER. (*crosses up to R., top.*) What, ho ! (*MISS SOMERDOWN crosses to L.*)

Enter NEB, C. from R.

GOVER. Desire Captain Holystone, and Lieutenant Trevor, to walk this way.

NEB. Iss, Massa. Suffin a matter wid old gubbernor, I can tell by him eye, and pretty maid a crying, too. Oh, golly !
Exit, C. and R.

GOVER. But remember, Miss Somerdown, with this consent to become mine, you must renounce Lieutenant Trevor for ever.

Enter CAPTAIN and TREVOR, C. from R.

CAPTAIN. I believe you wish to see us, Mr. Brown ?

GOVER. I do, sir. Lieutenant Trevor, I understand you are not overburthened with the gifts of fortune.

TREVOR. A low pocket, sir, with high expectations ; but at present, as poor as a church mouse. I suppose Emily told you that ?

GOVER. Miss Somerdown, sir, has told me the truth ; and your future fortunes shall be my care.

TREVOR. (*to CAPTAIN.*) I told you so ! Of all the Browns in the world, this is the best of the name, I ever met with.

CAPTAIN. Hold your tongue, and hear what he's going to say.

GOVER. I beg also to inform you, as you are interested in the fate of this young lady, that I take on myself to relieve her father's embarrassments.

TREVOR. Thank you, thank you, for her dear sake. (to CAPTAIN.) He'll give us a thumping marriage portion presently.

CAPTAIN. (R.) A jolly old dog, indeed, so far.

GOVER. In this pocket-book, lieutenant, you will find a sum sufficient to promote your welfare and interests; but I fear it will prove but a poor compensation for losing a treasure so inestimable as this lady.

TREVOR. (R. C.) Losing Emily?

CAPTAIN. (*aside*.) Curse me, if I didn't think this, all along.

TREVOR. Perhaps, sir, you will be kind enough to explain yourself.

GOVER. Willingly. Miss Somerdown has consented to become my wife.

CAPTAIN. She hasn't.

GOVER. (L. C.) She has.

CAPTAIN. Then by the Lord Harry, she's as great a fool as the rest

TREVOR. Your wife! Emily, speak to me—is this true, or am I losing my senses?

MISS S. (L.) My father, Trevor. I must save him, though I lose you for ever.

TREVOR. Take back your *present*, sir. Your soul must indeed be narrow, when you would insult me, by offering money, as a balm for wounded affection.

CAPTAIN. I expected this—but—I shall choke with vexation. Mr. Brown, or whatever your name may be—you're a cruel Bluebeard of a buccaneer. A man without feeling is a ship without a compass—a cannon without a ball—a—a—I can't speak. Fred, call him a scoundrel for me.

Enter LETTY, HICKORY, and NEB, C. from R.

LETTY. (C.) Come along, governor. Why, what's the matter here? Neb told me, my dear, you were crying. What's the matter? I insist on knowing, Mr. Brown. I understand you've been talking to this young person, and I must know, noli solus, whether you will or not, what you have said to her to give her the miseries.

HICK. Surely, my dear—hush—you can't suspect Mr. Brown of saying anything to—

LETTY. Oh, don't tell me, governor, some of them old chaps are worse than the young ones. Heaven help me! I had my temptations when I lived in a cemetery—now, Mr. Brown, explain if you please.

GOVER. Certainly. This lady has consented to become my wife.

LETTY. Your wife! Why, she's in love with the lieutenant there.

~~But he's poor.~~

LETTY. Poor! Oh, I see—she's been forced into this; but sooner than she shall throw herself away on any old fellow in Christendom—there, my love. (*goes to her.*) There's the £2,000 Brown gave me just now—so marry and be happy with the lad of your heart. (*goes back to place.*)

TREVOR. Generous girl!

HICK. There's our marriage portion diddled.

LETTY. And my dear governor, we must do something handsome for the young couple after we're married.

GOVER. I'm sorry to disturb the happiness of even a governor's lady—but unfortunately for your hopes, your dear governor there, is no governor.

LETTY. No governor! Governor, ain't you a governor?

HICK. Since it must out, I confess, Miss Somerdown, I am not.

GOVER. Nor is that lady Miss Somerdown.

HICK. Not Miss Somerdown? Miss Somerdown, ain't you Miss Somerdown?

LETTY. Since it must out, I must confess I am not.

HICK. Indeed! And pray who are you, then?

LETTY. Letty Briggs, of Cow Cross, Smithfield, leading to the Sessions House, Clerkenwell Green—and pray who are you?

HICK. Hickory Short, gentleman-in-waiting to the governor.

LETTY. And who is the governor, after all?

GOVER. I am the governor.

OMNES. (*excepted HICKORY and CAPTAIN, interested.*) The governor!

LETTY. What, Mr. Brown! Here's a pretty cat—a—stroppe. Neb, (*who is up c.*) you grinning angel of darkness, this is all your pretty kettle of fish.

NEB. But no a gold fish, eh, missy?

GOVER. Well, gentlemen, as everything is settled now, according to its original intention, perhaps you will allow Miss Somerdown to be private before she enters into the duties of a wife.

TREVOR. I understand you. Emily—farewell! (*crosses to the CAPTAIN.*) My good girl, take the money you so nobly offered us, and—

LETTY. I won't—the money by rights belongs to that lady, and if you don't marry her, in spite of old hocus-pocus there, why lose her, and show me where you'll find such another, As for me, I came here for a husband, and if my little governor won't marry me—

HICK. But I will marry you—and there's my hand on it.

(both go up.)

MISS S. Farewell, Frederick! Leave me to my fate, and sometimes think of her who loved you better than life itself.

CAPTAIN. Come along, Fred—no matter, Let's quit this infernal place, and be off for England; and the devil take all hard-hearted and mercenary old governors, I say. *(going up.)*

GOVER. Captain, as you are bound for England, I have a consignment to make you, and in committing it to your care, I give into your charge an inestimable treasure; namely, a good daughter, to be delivered into the hands of a worthy father. But as you may deem this too much trouble, perhaps Lieutenant Trevor will receive the consignment from my hands. Heaven forbid that I should sever two young and loving hearts. Young man, make this obligation sacred, by becoming Emily's husband; and my blessing, and a good fortune, shall waft you on the wings of pleasure, to your native shore. *(joining their hands.)*

TREVOR. Governor!

MISS S. Mine—my father's friend, indeed!

GOVER. No thanks! celebrate your marriage before you quit for England, and your father's embarrassments shall be obviated, Emily, ere you return to his arms, a happy bride.

LETTY. Oh, bless you, you dear—dear good soul. I could almost find it in my heart to marry you myself.

GOVER. Well—what say you? Will you still marry “the governor”?

LETTY. No. Here's my governor, and I'll stick to him as long as he's Short.

CAPTAIN. Governor, give me your hand—excuse me for wronging your noble nature. Fred, my boy your hand. Emily, my darling—yours. My lively Letty, I'll have a jig at both your weddings; and Neb, you black dog, you shall swim in grog for a fortnight.

NEB. Tank you, massa—tank you. Oh, golly! what a happy nigger I is!

LETTY. *(looking round.)* Well, I see a great many good-tempered smiling faces about me, and that makes me think everybody is pleased; and in my *new character*, of bride elect, being rather timid, may I hope for your encouragement with heart and hand, for which favour I give you a general invitation to my house; and as we shall keep it open for the gratification of our friends, I shall be delighted to see you all every night in the week; and in return, I hope you will accept, before we now part, the thanks of my dear governor—

HICK. And the Governor's Wife.

CURTAIN.

